Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A semiconductor manufacturing apparatus, comprising:

a wafer support that has a tapered lateral side that supports an edge of a wafer from below said wafer;

a stage on which said wafer is placed; and

wafer clamps that push a perimeter of said wafer from above said wafer to adjust a lateral position of said wafer, while said wafer leans against the tapered lateral side of said wafer support so that a gap arises between an undersurface of said wafer and an upper surface of said stage, and to fix said wafer on said stage.

Claim 2 (Original): The semiconductor manufacturing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a holder that accommodates said wafer clamps.

Claim 3 (Original): The semiconductor manufacturing apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said holder is tubular.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The semiconductor manufacturing apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said wafer clamps are attached to said holder by screws.

Claim 5 (Original): The semiconductor manufacturing apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising a seat that accommodates said holder.

Claim 6 (Original): The semiconductor manufacturing apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said seat is tubular.

Claim 7 (Original): The semiconductor manufacturing apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said holder is attached to said seat by a screw.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): A semiconductor manufacturing apparatus comprising:

a wafer support that has a tapered lateral side that supports an edge of a wafer from below said wafer;

a stage on which said wafer is placed;

wafer clamps that come into contact with a perimeter of said wafer from above said wafer;

a holder that accommodates said wafer clamps; and

a seat that accommodates said holder,

wherein male threads are formed at an outside surface of said holder and female threads that mesh with said male threads are formed at an inside surface of said seat.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The semiconductor manufacturing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said wafer is placed on said stage whereby said stage supports a center portion of said wafer from below said wafer.

Claim 10 (Original): The semiconductor manufacturing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said stage is an electrode.

Claim 11 (Original): The semiconductor manufacturing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said stage accommodates a chuck for placing said wafer on said stage.

Claim 12 (Original): The semiconductor manufacturing apparatus according to claim 11, wherein said stage is of a cylindrical shape having a hollow portion and accommodates said chuck in said hollow portion.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented): In a semiconductor manufacturing apparatus having a wafer support that has a tapered lateral side that supports an edge of a wafer from below said wafer; wafer clamps that come into contact with a perimeter of said wafer

from above said wafer; and a stage that supports said wafer on an upper surface thereof,

a positioning jig, that is to be employed for positioning said wafer clamps, comprising:

a recess that fits onto said stage so as to cover said stage; and

a lateral side that, in a state in which said recess is fitted onto said stage, comes into contact with said wafer clamps, thereby specifying a position of said wafer clamps.

Claim 14 (Original): The positioning jig according to claim 13, wherein said lateral side is perpendicular to said upper surface of said stage when said recess is fitted onto said stage.

Claim 15 (Original): The positioning jig according to claim 13, wherein said positioning jig is of a cylindrical or prismatic shape that has said recess in a bottom side thereof.

Claim 16 (Previously Presented): The positioning jig according to claim 13, comprising:

an upper structure of a cylindrical or prismatic shape; and

a lower structure that has a cylindrical or prismatic shape and whose upper and bottom sides are wider than a bottom side of said upper structure;

wherein said recess is formed in the bottom side of said lower structure.

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): A wafer-securing method, comprising:

disposing a stage that has an upper surface on which a wafer is to be placed, and a wafer support that has a tapered lateral side that supports an edge of said wafer from below said wafer;

placing said wafer on said stage and determining a position at which said wafer is to be placed by said edge of said wafer coming into contact with said lateral side; and

adjusting a lateral position of said wafer, while said wafer leans against the tapered lateral side of said wafer support so that a gap arises between an undersurface of said wafer and an upper surface of said stage, and fixing said wafer on said stage, by using wafer clamps that push a perimeter of said wafer from above said wafer.

Claim 18 (Previously Presented): The wafer-securing method according to claim 17, further comprising attaching said wafer clamps to an inside surface of a holder.

Claim 19 (Previously Presented): The wafer-securing method according to claim 18, wherein said holder is of a tubular shape.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented): The wafer-securing method according to claim 18, wherein said wafer clamps are attached to said holder by screws.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented): The wafer-securing method according to claim 18, further comprising attaching said holder to an inside surface of a seat.

Claim 22 (Original): The wafer-securing method according to claim 21, wherein a tubular shape is selected for said seat.

Claim 23 (Original): The wafer-securing method according to claim 21, wherein said holder is attached to said seat by a screw.

Claim 24 (Currently Amended): A wafer-securing method comprising:

disposing a stage that has an upper surface on which a wafer is to be placed, and a wafer support that has a tapered lateral side that supports an edge of said wafer from below said wafer;

placing said wafer on said stage and determining a position at which said wafer is to be placed by said edge of said wafer coming into contact with said lateral side; [[and;]]

securing said wafer by using wafer clamps that come into contact with a perimeter of said wafer from above said wafer;

attaching said wafer clamps to an inside surface of a holder; and

attaching said holder to an inside surface of a seat,

wherein said holder has male threads formed in an outside surface thereof, and said seat has female threads formed in the inside surface thereof that mesh with said male threads.

Claim 25 (Previously Presented): A wafer-securing method comprising:

disposing a stage that has an upper surface on which a wafer is to be placed, and a wafer support that has a tapered lateral side that supports an edge of said wafer from below said wafer;

placing said wafer on said stage and determining a position at which said wafer is to be placed by said edge of said wafer coming into contact with said lateral side;

securing said wafer by using wafer clamps that come into contact with a perimeter of said wafer from above said wafer;

fitting a positioning jig, that has a lateral side and a recess that is fittable onto said stage, onto said stage so as to cover said stage; and

positioning said wafer clamps by bringing said wafer clamps into contact with said lateral side of said jig.

Claim 26 (Previously Presented): The wafer-securing method according to claim 25, wherein said jig has a lateral side that is perpendicular to said upper surface of said stage when said recess is fitted onto said stage.

Claim 27 (Previously Presented): The wafer-securing method according to claim 25, wherein said jig has a cylindrical or prismatic shape that has said recess in a bottom side thereof.

Claim 28 (Previously Presented): The wafer-securing method according to claim 25, wherein said jig comprises:

an upper structure of a cylindrical or prismatic shape; and

a lower structure that has a cylindrical or prismatic shape and which has upper and bottom sides that are wider than a bottom side of said upper structure,

wherein said recess is formed in the bottom side of said lower structure.